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Warriors: Shadestar's Agony

Author's Note

Shadestar started out like all kits, innocent. But seasons later, he became the leader we all know at this point, hated so much that cats cheered when his death was announced. But why did he hate the other Clans so much? Read on and you may find that there is a reason behind his attitude. Much like the RiverClan leader, Salmonstar, he experienced many tragic events in his younger like...but had a completely different response than her. He decided to take matters into his own paws...and vowed that later on, he'd get revenge for the agony the other Clans had inflicted on him.

Hope you enjoy this book and thanks for reading this!

Allegiances

Allegiances

SHADOWCLAN

Leader

Maplestar

Deputy

Squirrelstorm

Medicine Cat

Rowanleaf

Apprentice, Pinepaw

Warriors

Snaketooth

Nettlestorm

Toadsplash

Apprentice, Mintpaw

Sweetberry

Duskwhisker

Bramblethorn

Cinderstorm

Poppyfur

Birchshade

Thrushwing

Sorrelstorm

Mistfur

Emberblaze

Dovefeather

Fernfrost

Apprentice, Lilypaw

Spidersplash

Cedarleaf

Apprentices

Lilypaw

Mintpaw

Pinepaw

Queens

Cloudfrost-(nursing Snaketooth’s kits: Shadekit, Russetkit, and Firekit)

Snowcloud(expecting Duskwhisker’s kits)

Elders

Ravenwing

Finchflight

Applestorm

Prologue

Prologue

"We may have been defeated but we mustn't give up," Shadestar growled fiercely. "Now it is time! We will once more attempt to take to RiverClan territory that should be ours in two days! And this time, we won't lose!"

Lilyheart came up to him as he ended the meeting. "Why do you insist on trying to take that RiverClan territory? Half of the time, I feel like I don't even know who you are anymore!" she meowed.

"It never hurts to have more territory," he replied. "Besides, that's Troutstar's Clan. You know just as well as I do that she killed Cloudfrost."

"It's not a pine forest! You'd never even use the territory!" Lilyheart retorted. "Troutstar is a noble cat with honor, unlike you. I would bet she didn't kill your mother intentionally!"

"Leave me alone! It's my decision and I will not change my mind!" he snapped.

***

The next morning, Shadestar woke up early and trotted out of camp, planning on hunting. Close to the RiverClan border, he spotted a frog and paused, only to hear soft pawsteps on the marshy ground somewhere nearby. The ShadowClan leader abandoned the potential fresh-kill to investigate who the pawsteps belonged to. He found himself face-to-face with a light brown she-cat with patches of white fur. "Lilyheart!" he shouted and she spun around in surprise. "What are you doing here?"

Shadestar thought he saw fear flash in her blue eyes but it quickly was replaced by a defiant gleam. "I'm going to tell

Troutstar your plans," Lilyheart answered. "You've turned ShadowClan into a Clan that is hated by everyone and I do not wish for all of us to be seen that way anymore."

Shadestar knocked her to the ground and planted a paw on her chest. "You apparently have no understanding of the warrior code," he hissed. "If you did, you would know better than to disobey your leader. I am afraid I must teach you a lesson."

Shadestar unsheathed his claws, intending to rake them across her muzzle. But she resumed her fruitless attempts to escape just as the ShadowClan leader brought his paw down towards her face. He gasped in horror as his claws struck Lilyheart's neck and almost instantly, her breathing abruptly halted and her eyes closed. *No! Oh StarClan, please forgive me! I swear, I didn't mean to kill her! I was only trying to punish her for betraying ShadowClan! You should know I would never do that to my own mate on purpose…*

Shadestar walked slowly back to camp, her words echoing in his mind the whole time. *What have I become…no, I've become a good leader who tries to prosper his Clan even at the cost of the other Clans. Don't listen to Lilyheart. She's wrong. Totally wrong. She was a traitor, she deserved to die…*

The ShadowClan leader carefully washed the blood off of his claws in the small puddle just outside of camp and numbly padded back in through the thorn tunnel.

A/N: This is literally the 4th prologue I've written, I wanted this book to start out with something different than any other Warriors fanfic I've written before..anyhow, hope you enjoyed and please comment!

Chapter 1

Chapter 1

"I'm so excited to explore camp!" Shadekit squeaked excitedly.

How big is it? Will the warriors be as gigantic as Cloudfrost and Snowcloud? Will I see my father, Snaketooth?

Shadekit led the way out into the camp with Firekit and Russetkit close behind. It was a small patch of land surrounded by pine trees. Each den was a bramble thicket similar to the nursery. The young kit couldn't stop staring at the camp entrance.

The forest was huge! Staring at the horizon directly ahead, Shadekit saw the dark green of the ShadowClan treetops change to a lighter green. *That must be where our territory ends and the ThunderClan territory begins.*

To the right of the entrance, the treetops abruptly ended in the distance. *That's got to be where RiverClan territory starts.*

Shadekit took a step forward towards the camp entrance. The forest scents called his name, awakening something deep inside his heart. *I want to see our territory today…camp can wait.*

Shadekit began to walk towards the camp entrance. Suddenly, he felt some cat gently grab him by the scruff and drag him backwards. He tried to escape but eventually surrendered. He was placed on the ground and turned around to see Cloudfrost. "Not yet, Shadekit," his mother purred. "Some day though, you'll be able to see the whole territory and perhaps farther than that."

"But I want to see it today! Please? Just for a little bit?" he begged.

"I'm sorry but it's against the warrior code because it's

not safe for an inexperienced kit to wander through the forest with no supervision," Cloudfrost replied.

Shadekit wanted to scream about how unfair these dumb rules were. *They just don't want kits to enjoy themselves!* "Then we can't do anything fun?" he meowed sadly.

"You can ask the elders for a story," Cloudfrost suggested.

Shadekit perked up slightly at that. "Okay, where is their den?" he asked.

Cloudfrost pointed with her tail to a bramble thicket near the camp entrance directly across from him. "Russetkit! Firekit!" he yelled. "Let's go meet the elders!"

Russetkit and Firekit were nowhere to be seen. Shadekit searched for a long time and eventually found them inside of a bramble thicket with a sandy floor playing with some strange-smelling leaves. Russetkit tossed one into the air and knocked it to the ground with a paw as it began to drift downwards. She noticed Shadekit and slid a leaf towards him. "Here! Play with this! It's so much fun!" she exclaimed.

Shadekit copied her previous movements and watched as it fluttered back down towards him. He leapt and reached out with a forepaw, bringing the leaf to the ground with a triumphant cry. Suddenly, a shadow fell over them and the three kits spun around. A massive dark brown tom blocked the entrance to the den, eyes narrowed. "What are you three doing in here?" he demanded.

Shadekit backed away, frightened, and crashed into a stack of berries. He tumbled to the ground but quickly scrambled back to his paws. The cat's whiskers were twitching with amusement. "W-who are you?" the black-furred kit stammered.

"I am Rowanleaf, the medicine cat," the tom growled, his eyes softening.

"What's a medicine cat?" Firekit wondered aloud. "Is it a

type of warrior?"

Rowanleaf shook his head. "We take care of the Clan by healing injuries and we speak with StarClan to receive messages from our ancestors," he replied.

"Yuck," Shadekit and Firekit meowed in unison, but to the young kit's confusion, Russetkit looked genuinely interested.

"That sounds really boring," Shadekit added.

Rowanleaf chuckled. "Typical kits who wish to become warriors," he purred. "Anyhow, I suppose you aren't aware of the fact that you aren't allowed to mess with those herbs, are you?"

"No," Shadekit answered. "Are you saying you don't want us to touch those leaves?"

The medicine cat nodded. "I advise kits to avoid the medicine cat den completely because they can't resist mischief when they're in here," he meowed. "You should return to your mother and if you're in here again, don't mess with the herbs. Understood?"

"Yes, Rowanleaf," Shadekit sighed.

The three kits padded out of the den. *I don't understand why any cat would choose to be a medicine cat…I'm going to be the best warrior ever!*

A/N: I am considering writing a book that picks up after Crazystar's Greatest Challenge concludes. This does not mean I'll be abandoning this novel, it just means I'll be writing both. What do you all think? Please let me know!

Anyhow, hope you enjoyed and please comment with your thoughts :D

Chapter 2

Chapter 2

"What are you doing on ShadowClan territory, Firestar?"

His sister lifted her head. "This land belongs to ThunderClan! Take your warriors and leave, Shadestar!"

"Never!" the black-furred tom snarled fiercely. "You're no match for ShadowClan! I know my deputy, Nightwhisker, agrees, right?"

Nightkit, one of Snowcloud's kits, lifted his head. "We'll destroy you!"

Firekit snorted. "Sure. That's why my deputy, Darkflower, is a better fighter than you!"

"That's why Russetpelt, the cat you used to call your 'best warrior', is off mixing herbs in Rowanleaf's boring den!" Shadekit countered.

A hint of sadness entered Firekit's eyes and she stopped pretending to be a hostile enemy of her brother. "I can't believe she said last night that she's planning on being a medicine cat! Their duties are so dumb compared to the noble responsibilities of a ShadowClan warrior!"

Shadekit nodded in agreement. "It's a frog-brained decision. Russetkit has a brain, I'm sure she'll change her mind soon when she realizes she'll be sorting herbs and doing apprentice duties all day."

At that moment, Russetkit emerged from the bramble thicket where Rowanleaf's herbs were sheltered, eyes gleaming. "Guess what? Rowanleaf taught me how to prevent infection using goldenrod, marigold, and cobwebs!"

Darkkit rolled her eyes. “That’s useless,” Snowcloud’s kit meowed scathingly. “None of us, except for maybe you, will ever need to know that! All you dumb medicine cats do is memorize lists of herbs!”

Russetkit wasn’t deterred. “We also get to speak with StarClan at the Moonpool and receive prophecies!”

Firekit stepped in. “That must be fun,” she acknowledged, speaking in a gentle voice. “But it’s only two times per moon and herb stuff will grow boring even for you! Are you sure you don’t want to be a warrior? You get to defend ShadowClan from the other Clans and you catch prey that keeps the Clan alive!”

Russetkit narrowed her eyes scornfully. “All you warriors think about is fighting! How pointless it is!”

Shadekit glared at her. “Go back and sort herbs, you useless furball!” he growled.

Hurt flashed in Russetkit’s eyes but she didn’t back away. “Fine, I will! Have fun playing your dumb games!”

As Russetkit disappeared into the medicine cat den, Nettlestorm tumbled into the camp, panting heavily. His ginger fur was stained with blood and his eyes were wild. “Maplestar! Maplestar!”

The tortoiseshell she-cat hurried out of her den. “What happened?” the ShadowClan leader demanded.

Nettlestorm tried to catch his breath. “ThunderClan! Trying to take back the Greenleaf Twolegplace and the Twoleg path land!”

“That Clan is already too close to our camp! Poppystar should know better than to mess with us! Oh, I wish Adderstar was still their leader! He was much less ambitious!” Maplestar snarled. “Anyhow, all of the warriors and apprentices, except for Sorrelstorm and Thrushwing, come with me! Nettlestorm, lead the way but stay out of the battle once we arrive. You’ve already

suffered enough wounds for one day."

The Clan raced out of the camp. Warriors and queens left behind were still wishing they could've been chosen for the patrol. None of them were watching the four kits very closely.

Firekit turned to her friends, a dejected expression on her face. "They should've taken us with them! We're good fighters and we'd shred ThunderClan, those frog-brains!"

Shadekit nodded in agreement. "So let's follow the patrol! I bet kits of ShadowClan can fight better than warriors of ThunderClan! We're the greatest Clan in the forest, after all!"

Excitement and anticipation flickered in the eyes of the four kits. "I'm in!" Nightkit declared.

Darkkit bounced around cheerfully. "Me too!"

Firekit unsheathed her claws and her eyes shone. "You couldn't go without the great Firestar, could you?" she purred.

Shadekit lifted his head and led the way out of camp. He heard the pawsteps of his friends, the crackling of the dead leaves that coated forest floor as the kits stepped on them. He carefully tasted the air and immediately detected the scents of his Clanmates. He followed the scent trail left behind by the patrol and could hardly restrain himself from letting out a cry of joy as saw his Clanmates.

Shadekit was shocked by the screeches of fury, fear, and pain that came from the battle scene. Cats fought furiously, all eager to prove that they were skilled, loyal warriors.

Shadekit took a deep breath and scanned the area. He saw Bramblethorn trapped beneath two ThunderClan warriors. He pointed with his tail towards the dark brown tabby. "We are ShadeClan and we will not be defeated!" he hissed. "Let's show ThunderClan our talents!"

The other three kits tensed their muscles and prepared to leap into action. They looked towards Shadekit, waiting for the

order to be given. The black-furred tom lifted his muzzle to the sky and yowled, “ShadeClan, attack!”

A/N: I don't know if anyone noticed, but I've changed the way I write dialogue. I've been advised to use less dialogue tags so I did. Let me know what you think and which style you like more :) Anyhow, hope you enjoyed and please comment!

Chapter 3

Chapter 3

Shadekit hurled himself towards the ShadowClan warrior closest to him and his friends followed. The she-cat yelped in surprise, quickly rolling over in an attempt to dislodge her attacker, not realizing Shadekit was the one sinking his thorn-sharp claws into her back.

Bramblethorn scrambled back to his paws as his opponents suddenly staggered away from him and stared around in bewilderment. His eyes widened in disbelief as he saw the four kits, two on each warrior's back. As he reared back and slashed at one ThunderClan cat's nose, he mouthed the words, *WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?!?!?*

Shadekit didn't answer. As the ShadowClan warrior that Firekit and Darkkit were attacking looked over to see if his Clanmate could help him, his eyes narrowed. "What? Sootsplash, they're kits!" the tom yowled.

Sootsplash's head snapped back towards her Clanmate. "What? Ashtail, you're kidding, right? Why is ShadowClan letting kits fight?"

Bramblethorn glared at the four kits. "They weren't supposed to be here. Apparently, they snuck at of camp."

Ashtail nodded to his Clanmate. "Teach them a lesson!"

Sootsplash rose up onto her hindlegs and Nightkit tumbled to the ground with a squeal, but Shadekit desperately tightened his grip. Ashtail followed the dark gray she-cat's example and Firekit and Darkkit slid to the ground. The black-furred tom heard their cries of terror as they fled.

Bramblethorn was forced to face both opponents once

more. Shadekit summoned his courage. *I belong to ShadowClan. I will not surrender and I will help my Clanmate!*

The young kit sliced his claws across the back of Sootsplash's ear and she screeched in pain. Ashtail rushed over to help his Clanmate. Shadekit felt teeth meet his scruff and he wriggled around fruitlessly, attempting to escape. The ThunderClan tom turned his head and tossed the kit across the clearing.

Shadekit hit the ground and agony exploded in his head. Everything was engulfed in darkness momentarily but his sight quickly returned. Still, his vision was blurred and pain pierced through his entire body.

Directly in front of him, he thought he recognized his father battling on fearlessly against a massive white-furred tom. Snaketooth's pelt was covered with scarlet blood and from his posture, he seemed exhausted. He tried to sidestep out of the way of the ThunderClan tom's newest attack, but suddenly, his knees buckled and he collapsed to the ground. Shadekit wanted to hurry over and see if his father was okay, but the excruciating pain made it impossible to do anything other than breathing.

Shadekit heard a distant yowl. "ShadowClan, retreat!" Maplestar cried. "Poppystar, you can have the territory for now. But I warn you, we will not allow you to keep it for long."

Frigid blackness swallowed him. Shadekit drifted in and out of consciousness. At one point, when he was half-conscious and his entire body felt as if it were on fire, he thought he heard voices calling, "Shadekit! Shadekit!"

The next time he returned from the dream world, the pain had subsided slightly. Pungent odors immediately reached his nostrils and his eyes flickered open. He was in an unfamiliar den and a bluish-gray she-cat he'd never seen before was staring at him with twinkling green eyes. He let out a soft groan. "Where am I?"

The bluish-gray she-cat padded over and gently rested her tail on his shoulders, reminding him of Cloudfrost. "You're in the ThunderClan medicine cat den."

Shadekit tried to pull away. “Why am I not in ShadowClan?” he demanded.

The she-cat’s eyes were kind and sympathetic. “We found you when we were patrolling the new territory we gained at that battle.”

Shadekit bristled at the mention of the terrible border fight and she paused, glancing at him apologetically. “Anyhow, you were unconscious and seemed to be injured so they carried you back to our camp,” the ThunderClan she-cat continued. “I’m the medicine cat for our Clan. My name is Starlingflight, by the way.”

Why would ThunderClan care that I was wounded? I don’t understand…

He met her gaze. “My name is Shadekit.”

A high-pitched squeal came from outside the den. “Can I help, please, Starlingflight?” the she-cat, obviously young, begged.

“Sure, Honeykit! Grab the smallest poppy seed you can find in our supplies for me, okay?” the medicine cat responded.

A kit with golden fur and sparkling amber eyes dashed in. “Okay! THANKS SO MUCH!!!!!”

Starlingflight’s whiskers twitched but she said nothing. Honeykit soon returned with a poppy seed and for the first time, looked directly at Shadekit. Her eyes widened. “Um, hi,” she stammered. “What’s your name?”

The black-furred tom met her eyes. *Great StarClan, she has gorgeous eyes!* “Shadekit.”

Honeykit blinked shyly. “That’s a cool name! It suits you perfectly!”

“Yours is better,” he purred.

Starlingflight didn’t look pleased with the kits’ conversation for some reason. “Honeykit, why don’t you go play

with your siblings? I bet Lionkit and Stormkit are having lots of fun!"

"But…" Honeykit began to protest.

"Go!" Starlingflight insisted.

Honeykit sighed and her tail drooped as she walked away. *Why did Starlingflight make her leave?*

Starlingflight pushed the poppy seed towards him with her paw. "Eat this, and when you wake up, you'll feel better."

***

The ShadowClan kit woke up the next day, feeling refreshed. The pain was almost nonexistent now and Shadekit couldn't wait to return to his Clan. Starlingflight was sorting herbs on the opposite end of the den. "Starlingflight!" he called. "Can I leave now? I think I'm healed!"

The medicine cat spun around and looked troubled. "You can leave the den but for now, not the camp, okay?"

Shadekit was disappointed. "Fine," he sighed.

The kit trotted out into the ThunderClan camp, which was so different from ShadowClan's. Towering stone cliffs surrounded him and not all of the dens were bramble thickets. He now realized Starlingflight's den was a cave in one of the cliffs. A giant chunk of rock rose from the ground directly across from the camp entrance.

A tom with dark brown fur marched over to him. "You don't belong here, you mouse-brained ShadowClan fool!"

At that moment, Starlingflight emerged from her den. "Leave him alone, Thornpaw!" the medicine cat hissed.

Thornpaw glared at her and stomped away. Starlingflight sighed sadly. "I apologize for the cats who aren't very welcoming. You'll learn to love it here."

You'll learn to love it here? What is that supposed to mean?

Shadekit looked at her with pleading eyes. "When can I go home?"

Starlingflight took a deep breath. "Shadekit, you're not going to," she meowed shakily. "Poppystar wants you to stay here and become a ThunderClan apprentice."

A/N: This chapter is much longer than most of what I've written lately, so I hope you enjoyed it! This took me forever!

And I bet none of you saw this coming, did you?

Please comment with your thoughts and as always, thanks for reading. Or in the words of Honeykit, "THANKS SO MUCH!!!!!" :D

Chapter 4

Chapter 4

Shadekit's world spun around him. *NO! I belong to ShadowClan!*

Starlingflight guided him back into the medicine cat den. "Are you okay?" she asked worriedly.

Wait…don't panic. I just need to gain their trust and then I'll be able to escape! "Yes," he managed. "I guess…I guess I'll give ThunderClan a chance."

Starlingflight still look concerned but didn't respond. She fed him another poppy seed and Shadekit drifted back into sleep.

***

Shadekit left the medicine cat den again the next day and felt an ache deep inside his heart, a fierce longing for ShadowClan. He forced it away. *There's nothing I can do about being stuck in ThunderClan for now.*

A light brown she-cat walked over almost immediately. "I'm Poppystar, ThunderClan's leader," she introduced herself. "So, Shadekit, how do you feel about staying in ThunderClan?"

"ThunderClan is a decent Clan," Shadekit replied. "But I miss ShadowClan…I would never forget ShadowClan."

Poppystar nodded with understanding. "You have great potential to be an outstanding warrior, Shadekit. We'll do the best we can to help you reach your goals and train you well."

Shadekit wanted to scream with how unfair this was. Instead, he just nodded. *Why do they force me to stay with them?*

Poppystar glanced across the camp to where Honeykit

was playing with a gray tom. “You don’t have to stay in the medicine cat den anymore. From now on, until you’re an apprentice, you can stay in the nursery and play with the kits.”

Shadekit began to walk towards Honeykit. “Okay.”

NOW GO AWAY, POPPYSTAR!!!!!

“Hi, Honeykit,” he meowed.

The golden she-cat abandoned the moss-ball game. “Hi, Shadekit! My mother told us that you were probably joining us in the nursery today! This is my brother, Stormkit!”

Stormkit dipped his head to Shadekit. “Welcome to ThunderClan, Shadekit.”

At least these cats are nice. I can’t take my anger out on them, it isn’t their fault Poppystar is forcing me to be a ThunderClan cat.

“Thank you,” Shadekit meowed.

Honeykit’s eyes scanned the camp. “That gray-and-white tom over there is Splashkit. And the golden tom he’s play-fighting with is my other brother, Lionkit.”

Shadekit studied the two kits for a moment before turning back to Honeykit. “Does Splashkit have any siblings?”

Honeykit nodded. “Yes, he has a brother named Mintkit. He’s sleeping right now though.”

Shadekit didn’t know what else to say. There was an awkward silence for a moment. Finally, Honeykit spoke. “Want to play moss-ball with us?” she asked.

Shadekit cheered up and temporarily managed to erase ShadowClan from his mind. “Sure!”

As they were playing, a white-furred tom entered camp with fresh-kill in his jaws. *That’s the tom who hurt Snaketooth!*

Trying to sound nonchalant, Shadekit meowed, “Who’s that?”

“His name is Cloudstorm,” Honeykit replied. “He’s our deputy.”

***

Moons passed. Shadekit looked for opportunities to escape but was constantly watched by either Starlingflight or Poppystar. At night, there was always a cat guarding camp, and he feared being caught in the act.

Not everything about ThunderClan was bad. Most of the cats were nice and he’d found good friends in Stormkit, Lionkit, Splashkit, Mintkit, and Honeykit. Honeykit was the closest of all… and although he’d never say it out loud, he was in love with her.

The apprenticeship ceremony for Splashkit and Mintkit was concluding. Shadekit joined ThunderClan in cheering for the new ‘paws. “Splashpaw! Mintpaw! Splashpaw! Mintpaw!”

Honeykit bounced over excitedly with Lionkit following close behind. “Shadekit!” the golden she-cat purred. “Splashpaw and Mintpaw are apprentices! Which means in a quarter-moon, we’ll be apprentices too!”

“Great!” Shadekit exclaimed, and he truly meant it.

Because if I’m an apprentice, surely it must mean they are starting trust me. And then, shortly after that, I’ll get my opportunity to escape.

A/N: Shadekit was only a little over 2 moons old when he was captured and now he's nearly 6 moons old, the age of an apprentice! :O

Also, just so you know, I finally gave this story a description...lol

Anyhow hope you enjoyed, thanks for reading, and please

comment :D

Chapter 5

Chapter 5

"This is a technique that only ThunderClan possesses," Leafstorm, Shadepaw's mentor, meowed.

Shadepaw gritted his teeth as he tightened his grip, sinking his claws deeper into the bark of the tree. "This is one of the times when I really miss ShadowClan. ShadowClan didn't do stuff to make you plummet to your death."

A soft chuckle came from the golden tom with a few patches of orange fur. "Well, ThunderClan doesn't make you do nighttime training. Would you rather blunder around aimlessly, crashing into pine trees because it's so dark that you can't even see your own paws?"

In spite of himself, Shadepaw's whiskers twitched. Leafstorm was a good-natured warrior with an excellent sense of humor. Poppystar couldn't have given him a better mentor in ThunderClan. But could Maplestar have found a better cat in ShadowClan?

Shadepaw crept forward on a thin branch, fur bristling. Suddenly, the branch lurched beneath his paws and he slipped off with a terrified yowl. Teeth quickly met his scruff and Leafstorm pulled him back onto a sturdier branch.

On the ground, Honeypaw rolled out of the way, excepting Shadepaw to come falling from the sky. She realized shortly after that he was still up above, heart racing and panting heavily.

The point of the exercise was to land on Honeypaw's back. The golden she-cat stood directly beneath the tree and was only supposed to move if she suspected Shadepaw had leapt from the oak.

Leafstorm gave him a reassuring nod. “Try again, Shadepaw! Honeypaw, return to your position!”

Shadepaw eased himself back onto the branch, moving at a much slower pace. He cautiously slid forward until he could hopefully drop from the sky onto Honeypaw’s back without killing himself.

As she’d been instructed to do, Honeypaw was staring at the ground but was listening carefully. Silently, Shadepaw stepped off of the branch. A sickening sensation spread throughout his body as he fell, the forest floor rushing up to meet him. He crashed into Honeypaw, who tumbled to the ground. She let out a startled yowl as he triumphantly planted a forepaw on her chest.

Leafstorm slithered down from the Sky Oak, eyes gleaming with pride. “Good job, Shadepaw! Now it’s your turn Honeypaw!”

Shadepaw allowed her to rise to her paws and she hurriedly began to climb the tree, eager not to be outdone by him. As Leafstorm prepared to follow, he glanced over his shoulder. “You’re a true ThunderClan cat now,” the young warrior declared.

Once, Shadepaw would’ve bristled at such a remark. Now, he wondered if it was true, doubts about his plan to leave ThunderClan rising up inside.

Leafstorm had taken him to ShadowClan border when he showed Shadepaw the territories yesterday, on his first day as an apprentice. To the black-furred tom’s surprise, the scent of ShadowClan had smelt pungent and cold. The shadowy pine forest had appeared dark, hostile, and unwelcoming. *I’ve been with ThunderClan for so long now. Am I no longer a ShadowClan cat at heart?*

Shadepaw was so distracted by his troubled thoughts that he almost missed the faint rustling of leaves above him. He leapt backwards and Honeypaw landed on her side with a thud. “Aw!” the golden apprentice whined. “No fair! Why did he hear me when I couldn’t hear him?”

Leafstorm gave Shadepaw a look of approval before turning to Honeypaw. “If you’d stepped off the branch like he did instead of jumping, the branch wouldn’t have swayed and he wouldn’t have heard you.”

Honeypaw sighed dejectedly. “Yes, Leafstorm. I’ll try to get it right next time.”

“It’s fine,” Leafstorm comforted her. “It was quite good for your first try, both of you! Let’s go back to camp and you can grab some fresh-kill when we arrive!”

Shadepaw trotted after Leafstorm as they began the journey back to camp.

A/N: Shadepaw is now an apprentice...and he's not certain if returning to ShadowClan is the right decision anymore :)

I've posted the first few chapters of a new series that picks up after Crazystar's Greatest Challenge. Book 1, which is the only one published so far is called Warriors: The River's End Book #1: Escaping Danger! If you want to, I'd love for you to check it out, I'm planning on making it better and longer than the two Crazystar books :D Anyhow, hope you enjoyed, thanks for reading, and please comment!

Chapter 6

Chapter 6

Shadepaw padded out of the apprentices den the next morning with Honeypaw following close behind. He stretched leisurely in the sun as he emerged into the clearing. Glancing around for his mentor, he spotted Poppystar leaping onto the Highledge. "Let all cats old enough to catch their own prey join beneath the Highledge for a Clan meeting!" she yowled.

Shadepaw wandered over and sat down near the back of the crowd. Honeypaw settled down nearby and his friends Splashpaw and Lionpaw came over and sat at his left.

The light brown she-cat's gaze swept across the camp. "As you all know, tonight is the Gathering. I have chosen the cats who will accompany me. Starlingflight, Leafstorm, Cloudstorm, Frostpelt, Darkstorm, Ashtail, Thornwhisker, Sootsplash, Rainfoot, Lionpaw, Splashpaw, Honeypaw, Stormpaw, Mintpaw, and Shadepaw."

"What?!" Thornwhisker screeched, leaping to his paws from where he had settled in front of the elders den. "Not Shadepaw! He'd tell ShadowClan all of our secrets!"

Poppystar narrowed her eyes. "Shadepaw is a ThunderClan cat."

Frostpelt and Cloudstorm were sitting at the dark brown warrior's right side and Frostpelt rose to his paws as well. "Shadepaw was born a ShadowClan cat." The white-furred warrior's voice was as icy and cold as his blue eyes. "How can we be certain we can trust him?"

"What proof do you have that he is a traitor? He has never done anything to harm our Clan!" Poppystar snarled.

"We don't have any, but once we do it'll be too late." Frostpelt's voice changed from hostile to calm and persuasive, as smooth as

honey. "Do you want to endanger your Clan, Poppystar? Trusting Shadepaw is as mouse-brained as when ShadowClan trusted Tigerstar! Imagine if he told all of our battle strategies and hunting techniques to his family or one of his old friends! Knowing how fox-hearted ShadowClan are, they would come and try to drive us out. CATS WOULD DIE! IS THAT WHAT YOU WANT, POPPYSTAR? WOULD YOU LIKE TO TAKE THE RISK OF THAT HAPPENING?"

Poppystar opened her mouth to respond but yowls of agreement drowned out her words.

Frostpelt looked to his son, clearly expecting him to support him. Cloudstorm shifted awkwardly on his paws as all eyes turned his way. "I don't have an opinion really." He shrugged indifferently as his father glowered at him. "Although Shadepaw never was or will be a true ThunderClan cat."

Any gratitude Shadepaw felt towards Cloudstorm vanished at that last sentence. Poppystar raised her tail, signaling for silence. "Do you all really think that I shouldn't let Shadepaw come to the Gathering? He's trained as hard as any other apprentice."

"YES!" Frostpelt's voice pierced through the air.

"Don't let the mangy ShadowClan furball come and tell all of our secrets!" Thornwhisker added.

Foxtail lifted his head. "He might be loyal but we still can't take any chances."

At that moment, the stone walls of the hollow didn't seem comforting. They seemed as dark and frightening as they did the day he first stepped out into clearing. They seemed to be closing in on him. An agonizing pain stabbed through his heart, worse than any wound from a battle. Shadepaw suddenly found it hard to breathe and felt like he was suffocating.

"LEAVE HIM ALONE! WHAT DID HE EVER DO TO YOU?" Honeypaw had never looked so furious before.

Lionpaw stood. "He hasn't been in ShadowClan for five moons now."

The golden tom sounded much more reasonable than Honeypaw. "He has lived in ThunderClan longer than ShadowClan."

Splashpaw gave Shadepaw a sympathetic look from his amber eyes before returning his gaze to the Highledge. "What Lionpaw says is true. Shadepaw more than likely hardly even remembers living in ShadowClan."

Mintpaw stayed silent. Worse than that, there was an accusatory gleam in his eyes. Shadepaw's stomach lurched. *Does he not trust me? I CAN'T BELIEVE IT! I THOUGHT HE WAS MY FRIEND!*

Most of the Clan still seemed to support Frostpelt and Thornwhisker. Poppystar sighed discontentedly. "Very well. I will honor your wishes but I wish you would give Shadepaw a chance. Foxtail will go in Shadepaw's place."

As the meeting dispersed, Shadepaw whispered to Honeypaw, Lionpaw, and Splashpaw, "Meet me behind the nursery."

Shadepaw darted across the clearing and squeezed behind the large bramble thicket. His three friends followed shortly after. "It's so unfair, the way the Clan treats you!" Honeypaw wailed.

Shadepaw couldn't meet the gazes of his friends. *These cats mean so much to me. Especially Honeypaw...they all defended me against the rest of the Clan. How can I leave behind such good friends? But how can I stay, when I'll be judged for the rest of my life if I do? Oh, why does my life have to be so difficult?*

A/N: For those of you who are celebrating Thanksgiving this Thursday, happy Thanksgiving! I'll probably write another chapter of this before the end of the week.

I'm going to possibly add a chapter with exclusive facts on important characters just because you all are such awesome fans! :) That's all! Hope you enjoyed, thanks for reading, and please comment with your thoughts!

Exclusive Facts on Important Characters

Name: Crazystar

Appearance: Has light gray fur and is often mistakenly said to have silver fur. She has light green eyes. As for scars, her left ear is torn and and she has a scarred muzzle

Fact: Crazystar has always had an irrational fear of heights although she never told anyone, not even her beloved Stonestar. Because of this, she canceled tree-climbing training once she was leader, saying her reason was that "it was dangerous because young apprentices could fall." When Stonestar became leader ThunderClan trained apprentices in tree-climbing once more. Although Stonestar himself hated trees, he understood it was a necessary part of being a ThunderClan cat.

Name: Blazestorm

Appearance: Has light orange fur with patches of black and dark blue eyes. He fell out of the Sky Oak as a kit so he walks with a limp.

Fact: Blazestorm had a crush on Rosekit first but after her death he fell in love with Petalfall, only to realize she loved his brother. He died a warrior's noble death, making a heroic final effort to defend the cat he loved. He was killed trying to stop a Dark Forest cat from invading the nursery, where Petalfall and Flamestripe were already fighting three cats.

Name: Whitefur

Appearance: Has white fur with a long scar down his left flank from a fight with ShadowClan when searching for Crazystar as an apprentice. His emerald green eyes usually contained a cold, mocking gleam.

Fact: Although Whitefur himself never knew it, his unique hatred for Tawnystar was because of her striking resemblance to his sister, Redwhisker. Tawnystar subconsciously reminded him of his "soft-hearted" sister, who annoyed him greatly.

Name: Flamestripe

Appearance: Has dark ginger fur with stripes of even darker fur. He has amber eyes and only a few small scars, much less than the average warrior, even after the Great Battle. His thick fur is the reason for that.

Fact: Flamestripe met Tawnystar at a Gathering once as an apprentice. He always kind of had a crush on her, but he most certainly loved Petalfall a billion times more, although he did think Tawnystar was pretty.

Name: Rosekit

Appearance: She looks identical to her mother, Petalfall, with the same cream-colored fur and sparkling blue eyes

Fact: She was named after her mother's dead sister. Her warrior name was Roseleaf. She became mates with Breezewhisker(Breezekit, one of Mousestorm's kits) and had two litters of healthy kits.

Name: Sunkit

Appearance: She looks like her father with her dark ginger pelt but with her mother's sparkling blue eyes

Fact: Her warrior name was Sunflame. Stonestar chose the ending to her name because she looked like her father. Sunflame died shortly after, killed in an outbreak of greencough.

Name: Crazykit

Appearance: Looks completely identical to Flamestripe's mother, with light gray fur and green eyes. The only difference is she has white markings on her chest and paws.

Fact: She was named after Flamestripe's mother, who died in the Great Battle. Her name was Crazyheart, and although Flamestripe never said it, she was his favorite of his four daughters because she reminded him of his mother. When Flamestripe became leader, Crazyheart was made his deputy. Crazyheart was friendly and loyal, much like Crazystar, although she talked more than Crazystar did or perhaps even Salmonstar. She never had a mate but that didn't bother her.

Name: Blazekit

Appearance: Blazekit looks like Flamestripe with a dark ginger pelt except with white paws and Crazystar's green eyes.

Fact: She was named after Blazestorm, although she did not look like him. Her warrior name was Blazeheart and like Crazyheart, she did not have a mate or kits.

A/N: Hope you enjoyed! That's all for now, but if I get a few comments saying you enjoyed this, I might make another chapter like this! :D

Should this be continued?

Comment if you think this should be continued, I will possibly continue it if I get 10 people who want me to keep writing it.